THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS'

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"*Thy word is from the beginning: and every one of thy righteous judgments endureth for ever*" (PSALM 119: 160).

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THE VITALITY OF "MORMONISM."

ADDRESS DELIVERED BY DR. JAMES E. TALMAGE BEFORE THE PHILOSOPHICAL SOCIETY OF DENVER, THURSDAY, DECEMBER 14TH, 1916.

WHY does "Mormonism" persist? Determined attempts were made, both openly and by stealth, to strangle the system at its birth, to destroy the mustard seed at the time of the planting: and, as the fact of its survival has become prominent, the certainty of its impending demise has been announced time and again; the fall of the umbrageous tree, amidst whose branches the birds of search continue to find food and shelter, has been often predicted.

On the 6th of April, 1830, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was organized as a body corporate at Fayette, in the State of New York; and the names of but six persons are of record as those of actual participants. True, by that time a few times six had identified themselves with the new and unprecedented movement; but, as the laws of the State specified six as the required number of incorporators, only that number took part in the legal procedure. And they, save one, were relatively unknown, and, in fact, obscure.

The name of Joseph Smith had already been heard beyond his home district. He was at the time a subject of rapidly-spreading notoriety, if not of enviable fame. The Book of Mormon, purporting to be a record of the aboriginal peoples of the Western Continent, particularly an account of the dealings of God with those peoples, in short, the Scriptures of what came afterward to be called the New World, had already been published. It was in reference to the title page of this work that the appellation

"Mormon," first given in derision as a nickname, was fastened upon the members of the Church.

Such a beginning as that of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints may seem to afford little ground of either hope or fear as to future developments; nevertheless, the newly-established Church was made the subject of assault from its inception. What was there to cause hostile concern over the voluntary association of six men and a few of their friends in an organization of openly expressed purpose, and that purpose the peaceful promulgation of what they verily believed to be the uplifting religion of life, the gospel of Jesus Christ?

Whatever may be the answer to the query, the fact that the Church met determined opposition, increasingly severe from the beginning, is abundantly attested by history. While active persecutors and openly avowed assailants were comparatively few, the majority of those who gave any attention to the matter treated "Mormonism" with aggressive disdain; and contempt in the affairs of human endeavor has not infrequently proved itself a more effective weapon than physical assault. In this instance violence and outrage resulted.

I invite your attention to "The Vitality of 'Mormonism'" under a convenient classification, though, as will be seen, the divisions are inter-related, and merge intimately together. Let us consider:

1. Facts attesting the vitality and virility of the Church.
2. Some causes thereof.
3. Some of the results.

I. Facts Attesting the Vitality and Virility of the Church.

To-day the "Mormon" Church is known by name, at least, throughout the civilized world, as well as amongst most of the semi-cultured peoples in the remoter parts of the earth, and on the islands of the sea. Since 1830, every year has witnessed an increase in membership, and an extension of "Mormon" propaganda. The six have increased to over half a million adherents. In Utah and adjacent states, in Canada and Mexico, between seventy and eighty "Stakes of Zion" have been established, each stake comprising several wards, of which there are now over seven hundred and fifty; and the greater part of North America outside the established stakes, as also many foreign countries, are covered by well-organized missions, each with its component conferences and branches.

The growth of the Church is apparent to even the poorly informed. But the Church has not only grown; it has developed. Between growth and development there is a difference of the most essential kind; and not a few of the grave mistakes of men, even in every-day affairs—in business, in politics, in statesmanship—are traceable to our confusing and confounding the two. Growth

alone is the result of accretion, the accumulation of material, the amassing of stuff. Development involves an extension of function, a gradation of efficiency, a passing from immaturity to maturity, from infancy to manhood.

Growth produces big things, and not only things of this sort, but men. Between bigness and greatness, however, there is a distinction of kind, not alone of degree. Growth is a measure of bulk, of quantity; it is defined as "so many," or "so much." Development is a gradation of quality; its terms are "so good," or "so bad." America boasts of a constantly increasing host of big men; the great men of the land may be more easily counted. And as with men, so with institutions.

Dead things may grow, as witness the tiny salt crystal in its mother-brine—at first a microscopic cube, then a huge hexahedron limited only by the size of the container or other external conditions. Development, however, is the characteristic of life to which mere growth is essentially secondary and subordinate. The acorn holds in potential reserve all the possibilities of the stately oak; within the tiny egg of the butterfly lies the future caterpillar, and the hidden glory of the mature imago.

The vital character of the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints was evident from the first. In masterly parable, superb in conception and application, the kingdom of heaven has been likened unto leaven, which a woman took and hid in three measures of meal; and, behold, from it the mass became leavened. I make bold to affirm that the leaven of "Mormonism" is leavening the world and its theology.

The most objectionable feature of "Mormonism" to-day appears to be its name. The fundamental principles of the system, its revealed truths, are more readily accepted when unlabeled. Every studious reader of recent commentaries on the holy Scriptures, and of theological treatises in general, is aware of a surprising progressiveness in modern views of things spiritual, amounting in many instances to an abandonment of what was once regarded as the fundamentals of orthodoxy.

In the new theology, "Mormonism" has pioneered the way. I admit that so radical an assertion calls for evidence; and in its support I shall ask your unbiased consideration of a few illustrative instances. As the examples to be cited, however, must have place in any exposition of the causes to which the vitality of the "Mormon" system of religion is to be ascribed, and as I assume that the actuality of the growth and vitality of "Mormonism" will not be contested, I pass in the interest of brevity to the second division.

II. Some Causes to which the Vitality of "Mormonism" is Due.

"Mormonism" is definite and incisive in its claims. It speaks to the world in no uncertain tone. Its voice is virile; its activities

are strong. It presents an unbroken front, and is unafraid. Its attitude is not hostile, nevertheless it is strongly aggressive. Its methods of work are those of reason and persuasion, coupled with a fearless affirmation of testimony as to the surpassing importance of its message, which message it labors to convey to every nation, kindred, tongue and people.

"Mormonism" lives because it is healthy, normal and undeformed. In general, a healthy organism is assured of life, barring destruction from external violence or deprivation of physical necessities; whereas one that is abnormal and sickly is doomed to decline. Opposition to the Church, the pitiless maltreatment to which its people have been subjected, comprising mobbings, drivings, spoliation, scourgings, assassination, and murder marked by every conceivable accompaniment of barbarity, have operated to strengthen the Church, body and soul. True, the heat of persecution has scorched and withered a few of the sickly plants such as had no depth of sincerity: but the general effect has been to promote a fuller growth, and to make richer and more fertile the Garden of the Lord.

"Mormonism" thrives, and is extending its influence, leavening the thoughts of men, because its distinctive doctrines are those of progression, in accord with the better manifestions of the spirit of the times, best adapted to meet the vital needs of the age. The timeliness of its establishment is significant and largely explanatory of its success.

The seed of the restored gospel was planted by the Divine Husbandman only after due preparation of the soil. The place of planting was no less carefully selected than the time of seeding. In the economy of God, America, which is veritably the land of Zion, was aforetime consecrated as the home of a free and independent nation. Only in such soil could the germ of the gospel of true liberty sprout and thrive.

"Mormonism" lives because its claims are consistent, and its position impregnable. It affirms the literal fufilment of scriptural predictions of a great falling away from the truth, a cessation of spiritual gifts and divine authority, in short, a world-wide apostasy from the Church established by the Lord Jesus Christ in the meridian of time. This condition of apostasy is that pictured by Isaiah: "The earth also is defiled under the inhabitants thereof: because they have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinance, broken the everlasting covenant" (Isaiah 24: 5). And by Amos, in his fateful utterance: "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord God, that I will send a famine in the land, not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the words of the Lord: and they shall wander from sea to sea, and from the north even to the east, they shall run to and fro to seek the word of the Lord, and shall not find it" (Amos 8: 11, 12).

The certainty of a general declension in spirituality among men.

the rise of false Christs and false prophets, of mystic and deceiving voices from the desert and from secret chambers, was foretold by the Christ Himself (Matt. 24: 4-5, 10, 13, 25, 26). So avowed also the Apostles—Peter (II. Peter 2: 1-3), and Paul (Acts 20: 29, 30; I. Tim. 4: 1-3; II. Tim. 4: 1-4: II. Thess. 2: 3, 4), Jude (17, 18), and John (Rev. 13: 4, 6-9).

The apostate condition of Christendom has been recognized and affirmed by high ecclesiastical authority. Let a single citation suffice. The Church of England thus proclaims the fact of degeneracy, as set forth in her *Homily Against the Peril of Idolatry*, published about the middle of the sixteenth century, and retained to this day as an official declaration:

"So that laity and clergy, learned and unlearned, all ages, sects, and degrees of men, women, and children of whole Christendom—an horrible and most dreadful thing to think—have been at once drowned in abominable idolatry; of all other vices most detested of God, and most damnable to man: and that by the space of eight hundred years and more."

No less definite than the prophecy of apostasy is the scriptural prediction of a restoration in the last days:

"And I saw another angel fly in the midst of heaven, having the everlasting gospel to preach unto them that dwell on the earth, and to every nation, and kindred, and tongue, and people, Saying with a loud voice, Fear God, and give glory to him; for the hour of his judgment is come: and worship him that made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and the fountains of waters" (Rev. 14: 6-7).

"Mormonism" affirms that the "everlasting gospel" has been restored to earth in the manner specified, that is, by angelic ministration. The necessity of a restoration postulates the prior removal of the thing restored; and the restoration of the gospel is proof of the precedent apostasy of mankind. But, it may be asked, had not we the Holy Bible, the scriptural repository of the gospel record? The letter, yes. But surely the gospel is more than a book. The Holy Bible prescribes administrative ordinances as essential to salvation—baptism by water and the bestowal of the Holy Ghost by the authoritative imposition of hands, the rebirth of water and of the Spirit, without which, unless the Lord Christ spoke to Nicodemus falsely, no man can enter the kingdom of God. Who will venture to affirm that a possession of a copy of the Holy Bible, or even a letter—perfect memorization of the contents thereof, can give to men the right to administer in the ordinances therein prescribed?

The angel seen by the Revelator, while on Patmos, was to restore, not the letter of requirement as to baptism and other essentials, for this the world had; but he was to bring again to earth the commission to officiate in those saving ordinances, that is, to restore the authority of the holy Priesthood.

"Mormonism" affirms that on the 15th of May, 1829, a heavenly

messenger descended in light and glory, and, laying his hands upon Joseph Smith and his companion in the ministry, Oliver Cowdery, bestowed upon them the lesser, or Aaronic Priesthood, saying: "Upon you my fellow servants, in the name of Messiah, I confer the Priesthood of Aaron, which holds the keys of the ministering of angels, and of the gospel of repentance, and of baptism by immersion for the remission of sins."

The angelic personage announced himself as John, known of old as the Baptist, and declared that he acted under instructions from Peter, James, and John, who held the Presidency of the Higher, or Melchizedek Priesthood in the apostolic dispensation of old. At a later date Joseph Smith and his fellow-laborer were visited by Peter, James, and John, who ordained the two to the Priesthood after the order of Melchizedek, which comprises all the authority operative in the Church of Jesus Christ.

Whatever criticism may be offered, exception taken, or denial asserted against these solemn declarations, the consistency of the claims themselves must be admitted. Authority to officiate in the ordinances of the gospel was brought by angel messengers, and they, the very ones in whom were vested the power of the respective order of Priesthood in the earlier gospel dispensation. This same strict consistency appears in subsequent manifestations. Thus, Moses appeared in the Temple at Kirtland, Ohio, and conferred the keys of the gathering of the tribes of Israel after their long dispersion, which work is abundantly predicted in ancient scripture as a characteristic feature of the latter days—the time immediately precedent to the glorious advent of the Son of Man. Elijah the prophet, in literal fulfilment of Malachi's prediction (Mal. 4: 5-6) has brought and committed to the modern prophet the authority of vicarious labor in behalf of the dead, by which the hearts of the departed fathers are turned to their living posterity, and the hearts of the yet mortal children drawn to their progenitors in the spirit world. True to this particular commission, the restored Church rears temples to the name and service of the living God, and in those sacred structures carries forward vicarious service for the redemption of the uncounted dead who have passed away in ignorance as to the necessity of compliance with the laws and ordinances of the gospel, without which compliance no man may see the kingdom of God.

Such facts as those cited attest the consistency of the distinctive claims of "Mormonism"; and consistency goes far to establish genuineness. "Mormonism" would long since have gone the way of all false creeds and systems, had its precepts been inconsistent, incongruous, or unscriptural.

"Mormon" doctrines are characteristically advanced and progressive, and herein lies a further explanation of the virility of the system. While in no respect at variance with earlier scriptures, "Mormonism" carries principles forward, and many of the

obscure passages of ancient writ are illumined by the rays of modern revelation. As stated, "Mormonism" leads the way to higher truths. Now, by way of a few examples, as promised.

(a) The unscriptural and repellent dogma of inherent degeneracy, and the contaminating effect of original sin, by which every child is born vile in the sight and judgment of God, long cast its dark shadow over the minds of men. From this conception sprang the practice of infant baptism, and the perverted doctrine of assured damnation for all innocent babes who die unbaptized. Even the Catholic church has modified its teaching on this subject, and to-day permits its members to believe that children who die without baptism pass to a state of partial happiness and content, though forever denied the supreme blessing of the beatific vision of God. It is conceded, of course, that no dictum, dogma, or doctrine of men can determine the fate of souls, infant or adult, in the hereafter; nevertheless, theological teachings have direct effect upon the thoughts and lives of mankind. It is cheering to know that practically all Christendom to-day, repudiates the frightful heresy of the eternal condemnation of babes who die without baptism.

Hear now the word of "Mormonism" on the matter, and note the time of its enunciation. In 1830 the Book of Mormon was given to the world. Therein we read, in an epistle of the ancient prophet Mormon to his son Moroni:

"Listen to the words of Christ, your Redeemer, your Lord and your God. Behold, I came into the world not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance; the whole need no physician, but they that are sick; wherefore little children are whole, for they are not capable of committing sin; wherefore the curse of Adam is taken from them in me, that it hath no power over them; and the law of circumcision is done away in me. And after this manner did the Holy Ghost manifest the word of God unto me; wherefore my beloved son, I know that it is a solemn mockery before God, that ye should baptize little children. Behold I say unto you, That this thing shall ye teach, repentance and baptism unto those who are accountable and capable of committing sin; yea, teach parents that they must repent and be baptized, and humble themselves as their little children, and they shall all be saved with their little children. And their little children need no repentance, neither baptism. Behold, baptism is unto repentance to the fulfilling the commandments unto the remission of sins. But little children are alive in Christ, even from the foundation of the world" (Moroni 8: 8-12).

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

In this world it is not what we take up, but what we give up, that makes us rich. H. W. Beecher.

THE LATTER-DAY SAINTS' MILLENNIAL STAR.

THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 1, 1917.

EDITORIAL.

INDIANS BECOMING WHITE AND DELIGHTSOME.

ACCORDING to the Book of Mormon, the ancestors of the American Indians were, at one time, a white race, exceedingly fair and delightsome. Because they hardened their hearts against the teachings of God, and committed all kinds of sin and iniquity, a curse fell upon them, and gradually, as their minds were enveloped in darkness, their skin became dark, too. Their mental state of ignorance and love of wickedness was reflected in their complexion and features. But, according to the same sacred record, the time will come when the Indians will hear the gospel of Jesus Christ, and when they accept it, the "scales of darkness shall begin to fall from their eyes; and many generations shall not pass away among them," before they shall again become a "white and delightsome people" (II. Nephi 5: 21; 30: 3-6).

It should be remembered that the Book of Mormon was given to the world in its English version at a time when human wisdom could not foresee such a change in the moral and physical condition of the American aborigines. In the United States they were driven from pillar to post, according to the real, or supposed, interests of the white settlers. Their hunting-grounds were being encroached upon, and if their braves endeavored to make a stand for their territory, they were soon overwhelmed. To scarcity of food were added, in many instances, the destructive influence of liquor and the diseases of civilization, and the Indians were fast vanishing from the face of the earth. It was the general impression, until a few years ago, that the Indians in the United States were doomed to extinction, together with the buffalo and other wild tenants of the boundless prairie. It was contrary to this general impression that the Book of Mormon announced that the red man would not become extinct, but that, through the influence of the gospel, his race would flourish as a "white and delightsome people," and the remarkable fact is that, for some years, it has become evident that the prophecy in the Book of Mormon will, in all probability, be literally fulfilled. The Indians in the United States are increasing in numbers instead of dying out. Many of them are being educated and are occupying responsible positions. They are gradually becoming a "delightsome" people, as Nephi, centuries ago, prophesied about them.

The subject was brought to our mind the other day by an article

in the Liverpool *Post*, in which attention was called to the progress of the American Indians during recent years. One of the evidences of this progress is the change of clothing. Four years ago one hundred and sixty thousand Indians had discarded their picturesque blanket for the ordinary attire of the white race; now the number is nearly two hundred thousand, and side by side with this came the increase from fifty-five thousand to seventy thousand in aborigines who can read and write. Not only so, but complete courses of education, from the elementary to the technical, have been arranged, the full term occupying ten years. Mr. Sells, Commissioner of Indian Affairs for the United States, reports that the "vocational" course of study "marks an epoch in Indian education, and through the emphasis of such education and training, the beginning of a new era in Indian life and accomplishments." Besides this mental ascent, there is much material prosperity to record. Four years ago the Indians under the Commissioner's control had a total income of £4,500,000; now they receive £5,625,000. Their live stock property has grown in value from £4,500,000 to £6,500,000, and the acreage under Indian farmers has nearly doubled in five years, the present area being 678,500 acres, worked by 35,820 men, as against 29,200 men at the end of 1912. As a result of this general growth of mind and estate, the Indian is taking better care of his family, and conforming in manners and modes of life to the needs of changed environment and the duty owed to those about him. In other words, the American Indians are becoming "white" in their mode of living, their education, their occupation, their ideals and aspirations. There is no doubt that this radical change will, ultimately, affect their complexion and general appearance.

Less than two years ago about two hundred Sioux Indians in South Dakota were made full-fledged American citizens and given patents to the land allotted to each of them. They invited Secretary Lane, of the Interior Department, to be present at the function, which was held at Yankton. In their invitation they wrote, in part:

"Thirty or forty years ago we were living in wigwams in our primitive ways, with the idea that the government owed us a living, and therefore we had no thought for the morrow. But in recent years there have grown up, superseding the wigwam, fine dwelling houses, and instead of our ponies being turned out on the prairies to graze, we have fine barns, with two or three work teams each, with lofts full of hay, cribs of corn, bins of wheat, coops of geese, ducks, and chickens, and where thirty or forty years ago were stretches of wild prairies, now grow beautiful wavy fields of corn and wheat, the industry of us Indians. We have come to know that instead of the Government owing us a living, the world owes us that living, and we have started out to collect it."

This is another indication of the material progress the Indians are making.

Secretary Lane attended, and a beautiful ritual was employed by which the importance of the new citizenship was deeply impressed upon the Indian mind. Each Indian was called out by his "white" name, and asked to tell his Indian name. Then he was handed a bow and arrow and directed to shoot the arrow. After this, the secretary said to him, calling him by his Indian name: "You have shot your last arrow. That means that you are no longer to live the life of an Indian. You are from this day forward to live the life of a white man. But you may keep that arrow; it will be to you a symbol of your noble race, and of the pride you feel that you come from the first of all Americans." Then, calling the Indian again by his "white" name, Secretary Lane said to him. "Take in your hand this plow." As the Indian took the handle of the plow, the Secretary said: "This act means that you have chosen to live the life of the white man—and the white man lives by work. From the earth we all must get our living, and the earth will not yield, unless man pours upon it the sweat of his brow. Only by work do we gain a right to the land or to the enjoyment of life." The Indian was then presented with a leather purse, a small flag, and a golden-colored badge bearing the inscription, "A Citizen of the United States," and the secretary impressively explained what each meant. Thus the purse means "that the money you gain from your labor must be wisely kept"; the flag ("the only flag you have ever had or ever will have") that the Indian must give his hands, head and heart to the doing of all that will make him a true American citizen.

In the same way, the Indian woman was handed a work-bag and a purse, and told what are the ideals of the American family and home. The ceremony was repeated with each man and woman, and, as it concluded, the audience shouted its greeting to each new citizen, hailing him by his "white" name.

It is impossible to contemplate the great change that has come upon the red race in America, without feeling convinced that the prophecy in the Book of Mormon has begun to be fulfilled. There are only a few Indians in the United States—less than a million, but there are others in Mexico, and the various republics of Central and South America, perhaps ten or eleven millions. All these will, in due time, come under the influence of the gospel and become white and delightsome. All accidental and imaginary race boundaries must be eliminated, through the gospel, before the coming of the day of the universal brotherhood of man, and that is the leveling work which is going on to-day in the United States, where the gospel was first proclaimed to the Indians, and where many of that race have embraced it joyfully, and are, in many instances, a credit to the Church.

J. M. S.

LIFE is not so short but there is always time for courtesy.

A SOLDIER'S TESTIMONY.

WHEN I was fourteen years of age, I had the seed of "Mormonism" planted in my heart. At that time I was a member of a Congregational church in Leeds. One Sunday evening the minister was preaching on faith, and, to demonstrate his theory, he told several stories. One was about a band of "Mormons" crossing the Atlantic ocean, when a violent storm arose. The captain, fearing his ship would be lost, asked the "Mormons" to pray to God that they might arrive at their destination safely. They prayed, and their prayer was answered. After the service was over, I asked my father, "Who are these 'Mormons' that the minister spoke about?" I was told that they were a peculiar people with a religion of their own, which very few people could understand. I continued to ask questions, when suddenly I got a sharp rebuke, and was forbidden to make such inquiries, or even mention, the "Mormons" again. From that time on, for about two years, I was longing to hear something concerning the "Mormons."

One day I was invited to a tea-party. When the party was over, I was returning with two friends, and one of them, addressing me, said that they had been invited to a "Mormon" meeting. Just imagine my joy when I found out that I had actually been in the company of "Mormons." I begged to be allowed to go with them the following Sunday to the meeting place. I can truthfully say that I have tried to live up to the teachings of Jesus Christ from that day, as they are understood by the Latter-day Saints.

It is now twenty-six years since first I heard of the "Mormons." It was two years later when I attended my first meeting with the saints. I was not allowed to join as a member until I was twenty-one years of age, owing to my father's attitude towards them. For five years I struggled hard to keep in touch with the saints, suffering great trials and persecution. No sooner had I informed my father that I had decided to attend the "Mormon" meetings, than he tried to persuade me to have nothing to do with them. I tried to reason with him, but he told me that he was older than I was, and therefore he knew more than I. I gave in on this statement; but I knew within myself that I had the light of the gospel. When he found that his pleadings were of no avail, he resorted to sterner methods. On one occasion he found a hymn book in my coat pocket, which I had carried home for a member, a friend of ours. When I had gone to bed that night, father came up stairs with the book in his hand, and said to me in severe tones. "You have been at those 'Mormon' meetings again, though I tried to persuade you not to. What do you mean?" Well, I was laid up for nearly two weeks with the cuts and bruises I received that evening, and while I lay on the bed I thought of the hymn, "Do what is right, let the consequence follow." It was enough to make me forsake the path of righteousness. But for the testimony I

had of the truth, I think I would have done so. Many times since I have thought of the words of St. Paul, who says he had been beaten many times, and had received many stripes for the gospel's sake. Again I received strength from the words in the Scriptures, that we shall be betrayed by parents, friends, and kinsfolk, and that a man's foes shall be those of his own household. My father and I have been on friendly terms, I am glad to say, since I was twenty-one years of age, but he has not been able to see the truth as I see it. He knows that I still belong to the "Mormons."

"Praise ye the Lord! my heart shall join
In work so pleasant, so divine;
Now, while the flesh is my abode,
And when my soul ascends to God."

This verse always appeals to me, and expresses my sentiments at this time. There is another verse which begins with, "The Lord gives eyesight to the blind." This I know to be true, for once I was blind for seven weeks, and suffered great agony. In this terrible affliction I had the consolation of the elders who visited me, and prayed for me. While I suffered thus, I was brought down to the very depths of humility. That made me realize my position before Almighty God. Then the Spirit whispered to me and told me to go in prayer before my Father in heaven. I did so, at the same time making a promise that if God would give me my sight again, I would serve Him faithfully in the future. The Lord heard my prayers, and now I can see to read and perform my daily labors. To those who have seen me and know me, and to anyone who reads this testimony, I stand as a living witness that these statements are true. According to the Scriptures, these signs shall follow them that believe. I believed, and was blessed.

If any of my readers are persecuted, scorned, and scoffed at, for the gospel's sake, let them say within themselves, Why should I be afraid of the scorn and ridicule of my friends, when here is a brother who has, perhaps, suffered more than I? Again, think of the sufferings of the apostles and saints in the time of Christ, when the Romans held power. Look upon the sufferings of our Lord, who died for us. Are we going to forsake our Lord and our duty to Him, for the sake of our friends? Let us say, No! A thousand times, No! Some may perhaps grow faint-hearted because this terrible war is depriving us of our elders and local brethren, so that it makes each one realize that he has to stand for himself. If this war has taken our loved ones away from us, let us not forget that if we need a comforter, we still have access to our heavenly Father, who will comfort those who have cause to mourn. Although I am deprived of the fellowship and the associations of the saints and friends and my loved ones, my heart and my thoughts are with them. I am at present in the army.

serving my King and Country, and I find that in my environment the Lord has not forsaken me. He has blessed me abundantly, and given me strength to resist temptation whenever it has come before me.

The above is my testimony, and I know whereof I speak, for the Spirit of the Lord bears witness to my spirit that these things are true. I also know that the gospel of Jesus Christ is now again upon this earth with all its gifts and blessings, for have I not given you proof of this, that the Lord has blessed me?

I pray that the blessing of God may rest on those who read this testimony.

Leeds. PRIVATE J. E. SIMISTER,
25th Durham Light Infantry.

PRESIDENT RICHARDS AT LEICESTER.

ON Sunday, January 21st, 1917, the Leicester branch of the Nottingham conference was favored with a visit from President George F. Richards, of the European mission. Three meetings were held. The Sunday School met at 10:30 a.m. The members of the various classes rendered an appropriate program of songs and summaries of the work done during the past year. President Richards gave them very good instructions. President John D. Hooper also made a few remarks.

In the afternoon a goodly number of saints and friends were present, and in the evening a still larger number of both friends and visitors attended. At both of these meetings President Richards showed in a clear and comprehensive manner the fact that an apostasy had occurred, and that the restoration of the gospel was an accomplished fact, through the instrumentality of the Prophet Joseph Smith.

Special music for the occasion consisted of a duet, and solo and chorus by Sisters Emma Stevens and Connie Lovett, and a duet by Sisters Lizzie and Louie Welch. A good spirit prevailed, and all seemed to feel the inspiration of the occasion.

LIZZIE WELCH, Branch Clerk.

YOU will hear one fact from them (apostates):—"Brother ——, have you enjoyed yourself since resigning 'Mormonism'? Now speak the truth. Come, tell us just as it is. Have you experienced joy and happiness since leaving the kingdom of God? Come, now, don't lie"! Brother —— answers, "I have not enjoyed one day's peace since I left the Church."—BRIGHAM YOUNG.

LET us have faith that might makes right, and in that faith let us, to the end, dare to do our duty as we understand it.—ABRAHAM LINCOLN.

SOME OF THE DUTIES OF SAINTS.

When we are baptized into the Church, we must not think that we have done all that is necessary, for we are only then commencing to work out our salvation.

As Latter-day Saints, our aim should be for the highest degree of glory in our Father's kingdom, and this is attainable only by keeping all the commandments of God. We live upright, honorable, and pure lives, pay our tithing and offerings, and keep the Word of Wisdom. These laws have been given us by God Himself, and if we profess to be His followers, we must obey His laws. No law is given that is impossible for us to fulfil.

We may think we are weak, and cannot do these things; but if we have sufficient faith and ask God's help, we shall be able to overcome our weaknesses.

To live our religion should be the greatest aim in our life, for by so doing we become honorable in our business pursuits, loyal to our country; we gain in self-control, and in numerous ways develop our characters, so that those we associate with may gain a great respect for us. In this way we are climbing to our goal. We must not forget that we have a great responsibility resting upon us in warning our associates and all we come in contact with, and showing them the beauties of the gospel. We cannot expect a great reward, if we see others groping in the darkness, and fail to extend a helping hand to them.

We all have a chance to explain the gospel at some time, and if we neglect it, or are ashamed of what we profess to be, how great will be our remorse when called before the judgment bar of God to answer for these things! It is no use for us to try to show others the way, if we ourselves are failing to live the gospel. Christ said, "Let your light so shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven." If we live right, some will be brought to seek the light through our lives.

Then we have another responsibility resting upon us in doing work for the dead. We are told that they without us cannot be made perfect. We could not be happy, if we knew that through our neglect those who are near and dear to us, who have died without a knowledge of the gospel, and also our ancestors, have been denied the blessings of the gospel. If we cannot do this work ourselves, we should seek to obtain the records that are necessary, and have it done for us. This glorious truth has been revealed to us; can we afford to neglect it?

Where much is given, much is expected, and there are no people on the earth that have more light and more blessings than we. We may have trials and temptations, but these are necessary for our advancement. "Anything worth while must be bought with a price." We do not expect anything in this life, unless we are

willing to pay the price. Just so with our salvation; we must be prepared for the hardships that come in our path. The gospel is free, but to gain the highest degree of glory, we must work all the time. By working and resisting the evil one, we gain the greatest blessings, both in this life and in the life to come. The richest of God's blessings can only be attained by living for them. Let us, then, not be content to drift through life, but do something in our own spheres that will help to make the world better. Let us set our goal straight ahead of us, keep our eyes fixed upon it, and never waver from our path. Then God's choicest blessings will be our reward.

Norwich. RACHEL CORY.

CHRONOLOGY OF THE WAR.

January 1.—The reply of Great Britain and her allies to the peace overtures of Germany and the quadruple alliance is a refusal to call a peace conference at this time, and a declaration that there can be no peace until retribution, restitution, and guarantees for the future have been secured.

January 5.—German-Bulgarian forces occupy Braila, in Rumania. Representatives of the Entente Allies meet at Rome for a general war council.

January 8.—German-Bulgarians occupy Fokchani, and take four thousand prisoners.

January 11.—The Italian battleship *Regina Margherita* sunk by mines. Six hundred and seventy-five lives lost. Great Britain and her allies, in their reply to President Wilson's note of December 20, 1916, state that their aims are: The restoration of Belgium, of Serbia, and of Montenegro, with the compensation due to them; the evacuation of the invaded territories in France, Russia, and Rumania, with fitting reparation; the reorganization of Europe, guaranteed by a stable settlement, based alike upon the principle of nationalities, on the right which all peoples, whether small or great, have to the enjoyment of full security and free economic development, and also upon territorial agreements and international agreements so framed as to guarantee land and sea frontiers against unjust attacks; the restitution of provinces or territories formerly torn from the Allies by force or contrary to the wishes of their inhabitants; the liberation of Italians, Slavs, Czechs, and Slovaks from foreign domination; the liberation of the peoples who now lie beneath the murderous tyranny of the Turks: and the expulsion from Europe of the Ottoman Empire.

January 12.—The German government, in a note to the neutral powers, declares that the encircling policy of Great Britain, the revanche policy of France, the ambition of Russia to possess Constantinople, and the treachery of Serbia are responsible for the war.

January 17.—The British Admiralty announces the sinking of many Liverpool vessels by a German raider, between the 12th of December,

1916, and the 12th of January, 1917. The tonnage lost during this time is 55,197 tons. The raider is supposed to be a Liverpool ship captured and converted into a commerce raider.

January 18.—The German forces are said to have sustained a check in Rumania.

January 25.—A German vessel—small and unidentified as to type—approaches the Suffolk coast and fires a number of shells. There were no casualties, and only insignificant damage. The attack lasted only three minutes. The chief of the French military delegation submits to the Greek Government a list of the Allied officers and the names of the twelve principal towns at which they will be stationed in order to exercise military control. The Government accepts the list.

FROM THE MISSION FIELD.

Baptisms.—A baptismal service was held in the vestry of the Latter-day Saints' Chapel at Handsworth, Birmingham (Birmingham conference), on Saturday, January 20th, 1917, when six souls were added to the fold, Elder James H. Ludlow officiating. The converts were confirmed by President James Laird, Elders Arthur D. Evans, Leland Hair, Herbert P. Haight, and Leroy S. Dickson.

DIED.

PHILLIPS.—On September 5th, 1916, while serving with His Majesty's forces, John William Phillips, a member of the Norwich conference. Deceased was born March 10th, 1891, in Wisbech, Cambridgeshire, England; baptized April 24th, 1905, by Elder John F. Anderson, Jr., and confirmed April 26th, 1905, by Elder Horace W. Vincent.

ROUND.—At Woodside, near Dudley (Birmingham conference), January 13th, 1917, Mary Ann Round. Deceased was born March 15th, 1831, at Woodside, Worcester, and was baptized and confirmed by Elder Neil S. Forsyth, at Dudley, June 21st, 1908. Sister Round died a faithful Latter-day Saint.

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